

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VIENTI 02297 281311 Z

43

ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 SS-14 NSC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-09 NSAE-00

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 RSR-01 /052 W
----- 042305

O R 281111 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3292

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

CINCPAC

RTAFB NKP THAILAND

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2297

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, LA, CB

SUBJECT: PW'S - WALTER CRONKITE

REF: STATE 056484

1. EMBASSY FIRST LEARNED OF SUBSTANCE OF CRONKITE MARCH 26 LEAD STORY MORNING OF 27 MARCH. IN DISCUSSION LATER IN DAY WITH CRONKITE, EMBOFF INFORMED HIM THAT WE WERE DISTRESSED TO LEARN OF REPORT BECAUSE FIGURES MENTIONED WERE UNREALISTIC IN EVEN THE MOST HOPEFUL CONTEXT, AND THAT IT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY RAISE FALSE HOPES FOR NOK OF LAOS MIAS.

2. UPON RECEIPT OF REFTEL EMBASSY PW OFFICER ASKED CRONKITE TO CALL ON HIM. IN ENSUING DISCUSSION WE INFORMED CRONKITE ON BACKGROUND BASIS OF US MISSION ACTIVITIES OVER THE YEARS IN ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP INFORMATION ON STATUS OF LAOS MIAS AND POSSIBLE NUMBER WHO MIGHT BE HELD CAPTIVE (#)

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VIENTI 02297 281311 Z

SOTH PHETRASY, HAD RECENTLY TOLD US THAT TO

BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE LPF HELD NO PRISONERS OTHER THAN THOSE ON FEB. 1 LIST.

3. CRONKITE WAS GENUINELY CONCERNED THAT HE MAY HAVE BEEN THE AGENT FOR CAUSING FURTHER ANXIETY TO NOK. HE INFORMED EMBOFF THAT ON BASIS OF OUR PREVIOUS CONVERSATION, HE DID " STEP BACK" A LITTLE IN A SPOT REPORT HE DID AT THE P. M.' S RESIDENCE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, STATING IN VERY GENERAL TERMS THAT THERE IS NO REAL GAUGE FOR ESTIMATING THE NUMBER OF PWS BEING HELD IN LAOS, IF ANY. ON BASIS OF TODAY' S DISCUSSION HE WISHED TO ASSIST FURTHER IN PUTTING THE REPORTED ESTIMATES INTO PROPER PERSPECTIVE AND WILL DO SO IN TODAY' S SPOT REPORT. HE REQUESTED PERMISSION TO USE PORTION OF TODAY' S DEEP BACKGROUND DEALING WITH EMBASSY' S RECENT CONTACTS WITH SOTH PHETRASY, TO STATE THAT USG HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH LPF AND WHILE WE ARE STILL HOPEFUL, WE HAVE HAD NO ASSURANCES THAT PL MAY BE HOLDING ADDITIONAL PWS BUT THAT EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE IN ITS EFFORTS TO OBTAIN CLARIFICATION.

4. WE ALSO DISCUSSED AS BACKGROUND THE PROVISIONS OF SECOND PARA OF ARTICLE 5 OF FEB. 21 AGREEMENT WHICH WILL SERVE AS A BASIS FOR CASUALTY RESOLUTION ACTIVITIES. WE TOLD HIM WE WERE HOPEFUL THAT MILITARY PROTOCOL CURRENTLY BEING NEGOTIATED WOULD PROVIDE A MEANINGFUL BASIS FOR DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE MIA ACCOUNTING PROGRAM, WHICH IS THE SUBJECT OF INTENSE USG INTEREST. THROUGH HIS CHAIRMANSHIP OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEES TO FREE JOURNALISTS HELD IN SEA CRONKITE IS QUITE KNOWLEDGEABLE REGARDING MISSION OF JCRC AND ITS PLANNED ACTIVITIES. WE ARE REPORTING SEPARATELY DISCUSSION WITH CRONKITE CONCERNING ZALIN GRANT' S ACTIVITIES IN SAIGON AND INFORMATION HE HAS DEVELOPED DURING HIS CURRENT VISIT TO INDOCHINA.

GODLEY

NOTE BY OC/ T: VIENTIANE 2297. (#) OMISSION IN PARA 2, LINE 5. CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

CONFIDENTIAL

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973VIENTI02297
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730341/aaaaikrk.tel
Line Count: 103
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION DPW
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 STATE 056484
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19-Nov-2001 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <13-Dec-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980107
Subject: PW' S - WALTER CRONKITE
TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, CB, LA
To: BANGKOK
CINCPAC
DPW
PHNOM PENH
RTAFB NKP THAILAND
SAIGON
SECSTATE WASHDC

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005